

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

May 5, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi,

Thank you for your leadership and for the dedication of your team. We are all in your debt—and looking forward to CARES II.

You have received a letter from the Pacific Territory Delegates regarding this next legislative milestone with our bipartisan, consensus goals:

- Further aid to education focused on staffing and online learning.
- Infrastructure funding focused on schools, and clean and safe drinking water.
- Healthcare resilience through full inclusion in Medicaid and the ACA.

As always for our insular areas, parity with the rest of America must be maintained in CARES II.

In addition, I want to emphasize here three issues particularly important to the Marianas.

1. **Timely access to federal aid.** Six weeks after passage of the CARES Act, my constituents have not received recovery rebates or unemployment benefits. Assistance from the CARES Act Education Stabilization Fund is nowhere to be seen, while Marianas teachers go unpaid.

Parity for the insular areas must mean that we receive aid in the same timeframe as the rest of America. Thus, deadlines for the commencement of funds distribution must be set in the statutory language of CARES II.

2. **Near-term aid to replace local government lost revenue.** The direct aid in the CARES Act is being used to address unexpected coronavirus expenses. But state and territorial governments are also facing revenue shortfalls due to the disease.

Particularly, in tourism-based economies, such as the Marianas, which depend on large numbers of visitors, not comfortably or quickly tested, and on public willingness to risk air travel, government revenues will be slow to rebound.

In the near term, direct aid to offset local government revenue losses are called for. Long term, however, direct cash aid to individuals encourage taxable consumption and employment and is a more economically efficient use of federal resources.

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- 3. Parity in VA health services for Marianas veterans.** Veterans in the Marianas continue to lack access to full-time VA staff to receive treatment for coronavirus, service-connected conditions, mental health needs, and to address homelessness. CARES II should recognize the service of these veterans by assigning full-time VA staff in the Marianas to provide the same care and services available to veterans in every other state and territory.

Should your staff have any questions about this request, please contact Bob Schwalbach, Chief of Staff, at bob.schwalbach@mail.house.gov or 202.309.5787.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Steny Hoyer, Majority Leader
The Honorable James Clyburn, Majority Whip
The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries, Chair – Democratic Caucus
The Honorable Nita Lowey, Chair – Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Robert C. Scott, Chair – Education and Labor Committee
The Honorable Frank Pallone, Chair – Energy and Commerce Committee
The Honorable Maxine Waters, Chair – Financial Services Committee
The Honorable Raúl Grijalva, Chair – Natural Resources Committee
The Honorable Mark Takano, Chair – Veterans’ Affairs Committee
The Honorable Nydia Velázquez, Chair – Small Business Committee
The Honorable Peter DeFazio, Chair – Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
The Honorable Richard Neal, Chair – Ways and Means Committee